DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

A PUPIL

OF THE LATE

JOHN HUNTER,

AND

JESSÉ FOOT,

INCLUDING PASSAGES IN

DARWIN'S ZOONOMIA.

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SACRED

TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE

ADAIR CRAWFORD,

MD. FRS.

PHYSICIAN TO ST. THOMAS's HOSPITAL,

AND AUTHOR OF THE

ESSAY ON ANIMAL HEAT.

SI NOBIS ANIMUM BONI VIRI LICERET INSPICERE, O QUAM PULCHRAM FACIEM, QUAM SANCTAM, QUAM EX MAGNIFICO PLACIDOQUE FULGENTEM VIDEREMUS! NEMO ILLUM AMABILEM, QUI NON SIMUL VENERABILEM, DICERET.

SENECA.

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PREFACE.

IT is difficult to ſay at what period of life a certain knowledge has been obtained, when once the time which actually was employed in it, has eſcaped all recollection.

For my part, I know not when the method of dialogue was firſt impreſſed upon my judgement: and I am not a little pleaſed by having firſt finiſhed, from a general idea of the nature of dialogue, what I now offer to the reader, before I looked out for a critical compariſon, in order to decide whether what I have done, be in any manner comparable with the mode adopted, either by antient or modern dialogiſts.

The common practice among authors is, to form the preface after they have

finiſhed the body of the work, and after they have allowed themſelves the indulgence of ſearching at their leiſure, for what might have been ſaid by former authors.

It would be preſumption to ſuppoſe that this preface can be extended to any length, but from ignorance alone. For who can be bold enough to offer to the publick a preface upon dialogue, unleſs he has ſo far condeſcended to rely upon his own abſtracted talent, as not to recur to authors who have already regiſtered the reſult of their learned enquiries?

He indeed who hath not read the preface by Dr. Hurd (the preſent Biſhop of Worceſter) might preſume, that he had ſomething to ſay upon the queſtion; but he who has, will feel how vain the attempt would be, to inſinuate a ſingle critical thought that might poſſibly have

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eſcaped the obſervation of this modern philoſopher. How am I to declare my ſentiments to the world? how am I to expreſs my admiration of that preface, which I conceive to be one of the moſt claſſic, the moſt perfect, and conſequently the moſt entertaining pieces of criticiſm that has been produced, ſince the days of Longinus?

Dr. Hurd did not undertake this production without being competent to the taſk: it was not arduous to him: it was the natural effect of a well-grounded education, foſtering taſte and reflection: it was the pleaſurable reſult of a real philoſopher's employing his mind for the benefit of the world; whilſt it might be fancied that he was indulging an uſeleſs, an unprofitable, and a ſolitary indolence under the ſhade of academic bowers.

To the clergy of England we muſt look for the promotion and preſervation

of literature. And when we envy them their incomes, we ought to reflect, that literature and morality are principally ſupported by them. That their time is occupied not only in the pulpit, but that the training of youth,—that permanent fountain of all that elevates the mind, and dignifies the conception,—is almoſt totally confined to them. The man of fortune may or may not appropriate his time to the production of uſeful eſſays; but the temptations which offer through life will make his purſuits precarious and unſteady, and turn aſide his firſt formed reſolution. The phyſician will obey the calls of practice. And the lawyer will be hurried away from his ſtudy by the clamorous appeals of conſtant ſuitors.

Beſides,—the clergy of England are the only conſervators of literature. In their libraries, antient and modern productions

ductions are depoſited. To theſe every growing generation can freely reſort, and feaſt on the accumulated labours of paſt ages. If theſe valuable archives were not preſerved, and if they were not thus open, where could ſtudents at all times apply? If books, like pictures, were collected only by the opulent, to decorate their private muſeums, they would ſwell their grandeur indeed in proportion to the rarity, and exhibit the ſpecimens only of the relicks of literature, of literature fallen into a ſtate of decay, by having been dependent on the caprice of taſte. We ſhould then find fragments of literature, like fragments of antient architecture in ruinous cities and falling palladiums. The doors of the great might be ſhut, where there was no liberty to enter. The capricious auſterity of the proprietor might baulk the zeal of the ſtudent. The hall might

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be too nice for the feet, and the books too neat for the hands of the vulgar viſitor; and the forbidding looks of ſturdy janizaries might ſcowl him from the door.

Then on whom beſides muſt we build our hope for the preſervation of literature, but on thoſe who condeſcend to dwell at the recluſe ſeats of learning favourable to ſtudy; than on thoſe who furniſh us with ſuch means of reflection, as ourſelves more generally engaged, would ſollicit without being able to obtain, and would be deprived of without finding them, but through their meritorious induſtry, obedient to our ſearch?

I am perſuaded that no one ever approached a clergyman with a becoming veneration, without being certain of receiving the deſired information from him, accompanied with a dignified and a gracious complacency. It is the clergyman that inculcates the *vita hilariter*

riter ducenda; for what ſtronger hold have we for ſolid happineſs through life, than from the improvement of our reaſon, and the eſtabliſhment of a ſtandard of morality? I mean to be underſtood in ſaying, that the inhabitants of this iſland never would have arrived to that exalted height of honour, humanity, and arts, but for the well-grounded inſtructions taught in our two univerſities.

I firſt thought of conveying my ſentiments in this form of dialogue from reflecting that the ſubject of thoſe dialogues now offered by me, had given cauſe to ſo many productions, in ſo many ways. That it had been diſcuſſed in eſſays, in criticiſms, in miſcellaneous journals, and in every other ſhape, but in this which I have now adopted.

And I firſt thought of dialogue, becauſe it comes ſo near to catachiſmal examination. It is a form of argument,

more likely to keep thoſe who cannot argue at all, and who conſequently wiſh to ſhew off without argument, as well as thoſe who wiſh to avoid argument for fear of the conſequences, more cloſely to the point. The ignorant will find their advantage, by having the queſtion placed fairly before them, and without its being ſo frittered away as to illude their capacity; and the deſigning will not have it in their power ſo eaſily to eſcape from that of which they cannot bear to be convicted, becauſe by their theory it has been contradicted.

Beſides the novelty of dialogue will recall the attention, when upon the very ſame ſubject it has been tired down with eſſays. And it ſhould be always remembered, that it is the duty of every author not to be faſtidious in his choice of that method which is moſt likely to engage the intereſt of the reader.

reader. There is a certain decorum belonging to a writer, as there is to any other profeſſion in life, and that is, to render himſelf as agreeable as poſſible to thoſe who pay him a reſpect. Every author ſhould go before the public with the ſtrongeſt recommendation he can bring.

I have now the opportunity of comparing my dialogues with thoſe of my predeceſſors, and of examining them by that ſtandard of criticiſm which has been erected in the preface by Dr. Hurd.

I know not whether I am to congratulate myſelf, or not, for not having minutely ſearched for a precedent in order to aſcertain the true ſpirit of dialogue, before I compleated my own, or after I had compleated it. But if I were permitted to expreſs my own ſatisfaction, I ſhould certainly ſay, that I am better pleaſed that I did not adopt a

model, and that I have not to plead in any inſtance, wherever I may be found defective, that I was cramped in giving a latitude to my opinion, from any rule laid down, and any decorum of dialogue obſerved by former authors.

Dr. Hurd has given the palm to the ſtile of Cicero, although as he candidly confeſſes, he could not himſelf keep up to it. It appears to me that the reaſon why he could not confine himſelf to that decorous mode adopted by Cicero, is ſelf-evident. The dialogues of Cicero were founded upon abſtracted philoſophical queſtions—ſuch as that, on Old Age; and conſequently the paſſions of mankind, their follies, their falſehoods, their hypocriſy, and their ſophiſms had not that concern in his debates, which is to be found in the ſubjects of Plato, of Socrates, of Lucian, and of all our modern dialogiſts.

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I do not conceive that it is poſſible for any man, to ſupport an argument abſtracted from ſome degree of paſſion: and I do not know, that irony and humour are not the moſt eligible inſtruments which reaſon has to work withal, when truth is to make its way againſt vulgar conviction.

What were the paſſions with which man is endowed deſigned for, if they were not to be exerciſed, under the controul of his reaſon? if they were not to aid his juſtification upon any point in which he had a right, and which he could not obtain without the exertion of them? Let thoſe then who think otherwiſe, convince me by good authority, that there is one ſingle example of dialogue without a paſſion in which the affairs of men are concerned; and that ſuch a dialogue is calculated to correct, either the abſurdities, or

ſophiſms of thoſe, to whom it is oppoſed.

There is no one part of the human character, which ought to be more faithfully watched, than the ſophiſt's. It is perhaps the moſt groveling of all ideas, to ſuppoſe that truth cannot be fixed. No one opinion can be more fatal to reaſon, than that which preſumes, that there is no ſuch thing, as a permanent truth.

Having made theſe few obſervations, I ſubmit my firſt efforts in this form, to the public, craving the indulgence of the candid part of them; and more eſpecially, as I know that I am ſurrounded by a gang of bigots, who would rather ſacrifice error to truth, than ſurrender a ſingle opinion of him, who was their preceptor, and againſt whoſe opinions, I have, and I truſt not inglorioufly, been long contending.

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If I have been found ſometimes two ſevere, let it not be forgotten, that when one aims to fix the ſtandard of truth, in oppoſition to vanity, ignorance and intereſt, one muſt not ſtand too nicely upon the delicacy of terms, leſt the arrow which is too faintly ſhot, ſhould drop before it has reached the mark intended.

The intelligent reader will ſee from whom I have adopted the manner of my dedication; and I know that I have not diſhonoured the idea, by the change of name.

Of the late Doctor Adair Crawford I truſt there never can be, but one opinion.

I have to regret, that he was not a practical phyſician, higheſt in fame, only becauſe his ſuperior accompliſhments were not more thoroughly underſtood.

His

His genius and his virtue, his meekneſs and humility, were the pride and the praiſe of his friends, but I fear that theſe cardinal qualities rather ſtood in his way with the public, when it is conſidered what the requiſites muſt be for conſtituting eminence, in the practice of phyſic, in this moſt extenſive and buſy metropolis.

J. F.

Dean Street, Soho,
October 6, 1795.

DIALOGUES,

DIALOGUES.

DIALOGUE THE FIRST.

PUPIL.

YOU will pardon the freedom which I have taken of interrupting your attention, but my zeal for enquiry after truth has led me to ſolicit a converſation with you.

FOOT.

May I beg to know to whom I am indebted for the honour of this viſit?

PUPIL.

I was a pupil of the late John Hunter, and as I admire candour too much to imagine, that I ſhall be the worſe received by you, I ſhall not heſitate in announcing, that the doctrines which I imbibed from my late preceptor, have been ſtrongly impreſſed upon my mind, although I truſt, they have not warped my judgement.

FOOT.

That is what every man would hope to ſay; but human nature is ſcarcely competent to ſurmount ſo irreſiſtible an hold upon the inclination. That which is imbibed from the firſt impreſſion cannot but remain more firm than you are aware. Few men think for themſelves; and fewer ſtill are able to ſhake off early-contracted habits of thinking, which they have implicitly received from thoſe in whoſe talents they have confided. And beſides that preference which is given to a preceptor, by whom the firſt rudiments of ſcience are imparted, there is a neceſſity for the mind, in order to be free, firſt to diſengage itſelf of an habit acquired from a wrong education, before it can commence a

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new ſeries of reflection. Now this is an undertaking ſo very formidable in its nature, that the generality of men hope to avoid it.

PUPIL.

But as I flatter myſelf ſo far, that I can attend to your arguments, and that I am open to receive any correction, my judgement being perhaps ſomewhat perverted, I truſt you will not diſappoint me.

FOOT.

I certainly ſhall not baulk your confidence in yourſelf, by heſitating to anſwer any thing you require from me.

PUPIL.

I thank you, and the unlimited freedom you have given me, I conceive as a mark of your liberality.

FOOT.

Then I cannot ſee that there is any obſtacle to your proceeding, as I rely equally upon your indulgence, that when you have interrogated me upon any point you wiſh, you will permit me, in my turn, to interrogate you alſo.

PUPIL.

With all my heart, ſir, I have no other intereſt but to inform my underſtanding, as long as I can obtain the means of information. Sir, the world at large are puzzled to decide from what extraordinary motive it is, that you, who have taken no other part in criticiſm but againſt John Hunter, ſhould have been ſo diligent and watchful in your criticiſms upon his productions. The world acknowledge your talent for criticiſm, but cannot be perſuaded that you are actuated by a pure motive and deſire for encreaſing the general ſtock of phyſiological knowledge, whilſt you adhere to the productions of my preceptor alone, paſſing over a critical examination into thoſe of any other.

FOOT.

That, as far as I know, may be the opinion of the world, that is, the opinion of thoſe, who had an opinion of John Hunter, that is, the opinion of thoſe, who, without conſulting their own underſtanding, if they had any, implicitly relied upon him. But the obvious anſwer to your queſtion is, that I never did wiſh to extend a reputation upon criticiſm; that

that as long as criticiſm is exerciſed as a pleaſure, it conveys in a very agreeable manner both enlightened entertainment, and neceſſary information; and that an author never can feel himſelf conſcious or happy, when his criticiſm is directed to perſonal motives, and not to the value of general improvement. In my various readings on profeſſional ſubjects, I have diſcovered abſurdities which ſtartled me, conceptions which no rational man would have formed, practice which no ſenſible man would have adopted, caſes which no man of honour would have given, and yet I was ſilent; but I will tell you why I was ſo; it was, becauſe I ſhould have given a ſignificance to any one of thoſe acts, if I had made my remark upon it. My conviction, my argument, and my language, muſt have attracted attention; and attention, thus attracted, muſt have encouraged thoſe very projects I meant to decry. It would have divided men's opinions by the appeal being made to incompetent judges; and my oppoſition would moſt probably have promoted that very intereſt I aimed to defeat; being fully perſuaded, that whatever is not rightly underſtood, is equally liable to be condemned, whether it be true or falſe.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

And are theſe the only reaſons you have to offer for your criticiſms on John Hunter?

FOOT.

Theſe are reaſons why I confined my criticiſms to John Hunter alone. John Hunter was not to be written into reputation by any criticiſm formed upon his works. His reputation conſiſted in an uncontradicted and ſubmiſſive obedience to what he ſaid, and to what his pupils propagated as his ſayings. And I muſt be plain with you in avowing, that as long as I permitted others to think for me, ſo long was I under the ſame influence of John Hunter's opinions with others; I was juſt as much chained down by them as the enchanted is by the enchanter, or the bigot by the prieſt; and ſo I ſhould have remained, if he had not publiſhed; for as I had not attended his lectures, I took the whole for granted that I had heard, extraordinary as it was, broached as his doctrine, without permitting my own underſtanding to go at all into the inſolence of doubting; but after he had publiſhed, and after I had

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the opportunity of comparing and applying talent againſt talent, and integrity againſt integrity, I thought I ſaw a great deal of room and cauſe, for aſſerting the right to a juſtification of points, which I deemed to be palpable truths in ſcience.

PUPIL.

So then you mean to avow, that you never had any perſonal quarrel or antipathy to John Hunter; that I am to underſtand from you, that you were induced to publiſh your criticiſms upon his opinions, in no ſenſe whatever, from any other motive, than purely becauſe you judged them to be open to criticiſm, from that motive only, without annexing to it any thing elſe relating to the conduct or character of my preceptor?

FOOT.

I was not induced to oppoſe John Hunter from any cauſe, previous to his publication on the Venereal Diſeaſe; or from any other cauſe but that which this publication provoked. I will go farther. I do not know that I ſhould even have oppoſed his opinions after they had been publiſhed, although I knew they became more dangerous in ſociety,

juſt in proportion to the reputation of him who was their author; yet I do verily believe, that I ſhould have let them alone, and left them where I found them, if I could have perſuaded myſelf that they were the opinions purely of a miſtaken undeſigning character.

PUPIL.

Oh then! I underſtand you. You mean to ſay, that my preceptor did not write what he thought, but what he pleaſed, and what was grateful to his thirſt after ſingularity.

FOOT.

You have almoſt anticipated my explanation, but not exactly. John Hunter was not induced to publiſh his leading opinions merely as looſe ſingularities produced by the ſportive effuſions of a careleſs mind, or ſilly miſconceptions of a weak judgement; for from the glaring abſurdity of ſome of them, and from the phyſical impoſſibility of others, I am led to believe, that as the chief part of his opinions, when carried into practice, would be injurious, he cared leſs for being thought a moral than a ſingular man. And this ſentiment, however delicate the ſubject of it may be, I mean to maintain.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

Sir, you aſtoniſh me; and yet I feel ſo much intereſted by the ſerious manner with which you avow your ſentiment, and the firmneſs with which you ſeem determined to ſupport it, that I beg your explanation.

FOOT.

I am afraid you are, without deſign, leading me into too wide a field; beſides, I obſerve that you come to me, as if you were not wholly prepared to defend your preceptor. I cannot be preſumed to take any advantage of you; but I ought to ſuppoſe, that you would not have thus intereſted yourſelf in this converſation, if you had not ſtudied the ſubject; and that you cannot be ſaid to have ſtudied it, without your having, in ſome degree, made yourſelf a maſter of it. Pray permit me to aſk you, have you read your preceptor's book on the Venereal Diſeaſe, and alſo my obſervations upon it with any attention?

PUPIL.

I have.

FOOT.

And do you know that ſeven years are paſſed ſince I compleated them, that is, ſix years before the death of your preceptor?

PUPIL.

I admit it.

FOOT.

Then I am ſatisfied; becauſe I have not, from what I ſhall ſay, to inform your underſtanding, ſo much as to help your recollection. You may perceive then, that during your preceptor's life-time, there were ſix compleat years for doing thoſe facts away which I had advanced againſt him, if that had been poſſible; and that he, and his admirers, were content all that time with evaſive anſwers to ſerious charges, not ſilently deſpiſing, but incorrigibly growling. Some have advanced, that I had had a perſonal quarrel with him, that I wrote as a rival, that I was of an envious diſpoſition, that I was jealous of his fame. Others were content to ſay, that I wrote to bring myſelf into notice, that the undertaking was preſumptuous and not worthy a reply, and that I

aimed

aimed more at ſevere wit, than plain matter of fact. Now theſe are the only materials which have been brought in reply againſt my obſervations, as if there had been nothing infallible in his opinions, or as if there had been they were too intricate for me to develop, too deep for me to fathom, that is, your preceptor's opinions were above my comprehenſion, and my obſervations upon them were below his and his admirers notice. Pray ſir, have you read other anſwers to my obſervations of a better deſcription, if you have, in whatever publication you have found them, be ſo obliging as to point them out?

PUPIL.

I muſt candidly confeſs, that I have heard you reprobated, but not anſwered; that in converſations and in publications I have both heard and ſeen many obſervations or ſketches rather upon your attack of my preceptor's opinions.

FOOT.

Yes, and they have been more like the curſory invectives from an incenſed paſſenger bawling in the ſtreets, than a deliberate in-

veſtigation from a ſtudied advocate; more like words common to mankind in a ſtate of provocation, than proper to literature iſſuing forth from the ſtudy of a phyſiologiſt.

PUPIL.

Your obſervation has, I aſſure you, ſtruck me for its truth; and I am free to confeſs, that had you been replied to manfully, perhaps I ſhould not now have been ſo much at a loſs for deciſion, or for the defence of my preceptor's opinions.

FOOT.

You know I ſaid, that, from ſome of his opinions, I could collect that he cared leſs about being thought a moral than a ſingular character; and I ſhall add, that as long as this ſubject is expoſed to every reader in your preceptor's book, or until the pages be cancelled and the errors of them be confeſſed, I will not ceaſe to counteract their baneful effect. There was vanity or venality in almoſt all his ſuggeſtions; and that obſtinacy which he acquired from the approbation of his admirers, would not permit him to conceal from the public what was the more indecent

decent by being untrue. His chapter on impotence would not have been endured if it had come from the pen of any other author; but I ſee the bluſh mantling upon your cheek, and I will ſpare your ſtate of confuſion. I am defending myſelf before you, and in that defence I am not unfolding a practice which ſhame always conceals, but which the conſequent deſolation of the conſtitution ſo eaſily betrays; I am not with a buſy prying eye detecting that which has not been avowed; no, I am anſwering a bold opinion, a challenge for inveſtigation into former opinions proclaimed by your preceptor, and in a public print circulated throughout Europe, or rather the known world.

PUPIL.

I am anxious, ſir, for your paſſing on to another ſubject.

FOOT.

Do you not think when your preceptor ſaid in page 12, " I could even allow a man " who has a Gonorrhœa to have connection " with a ſound woman, if he took care to

" clear all the parts of any matter, by firſt " ſyringing the Urethra, making water, and " waſhing the glans," that this was a ſingularity founded upon an immoral indifference to the welfare of ſociety, or a weak opinion from him who gave it, and injurious to him who followed it?

PUPIL.

I am ſure it was.

FOOT.

What do you think of the truth of the following ſingularity? Your preceptor has ſaid, that the ſpecific extent of Venereal virus is only an inch and a half up the Urethra, and that the pain, inflammation, and diſcharge which extend eight inches farther up along the ſame Urethra, are ſympathetic affections of virus acting an inch and a half only; Is this ſingularity to be accounted for by any rule which common ſenſe and general obſervation can poſſibly direct?

PUPIL.

The inflammation being extended all along the Urethra, and that part of eight inches which

which exceeds the ſuppoſed ſpecific diſtance of an inch and a half being of the ſame anatomical nature, being a continuation of the ſame canal, I muſt candidly confeſs, until I hear a better motive, that this opinion appears to me to be a ſingularity founded upon the moſt ridiculous vanity. There is not, and there cannot be a good reaſon aſſigned in juſtification of the affected novelty.

FOOT.

Do you not think, that from out of the moſt vulgar book that ever was written, as rational a method of the cure of Gonorrhœa is to be taken as that which is found in the work of your preceptor? Is there any thing direct in his complicated ſyſtem of cure? Do you or does any one of his admirers imitate the precepts of their preceptor in this inſtance? If they do, I know that they muſt be conſtantly ſhifting their remedies; and if they ſeek for reaſons for it, he has told them that they will find them all included in the word "perhaps."

PUPIL.

I cannot without expoſing myſelf to uncertainty follow my preceptor's ſyſtem of curing Gonorrhœa;

Gonorrhœa; I confeſs it; there is nothing direct in it; the whole of what he ſays ſeems to be dependent upon "perhaps's."

FOOT.

Then had ſuch an author a right to inſult other practitioners by announcing of himſelf in the public newpapers, that his acquired knowledge of the cure of Gonorrhœa was to throw all former authors at an humble diſtance? And pray give me leave to aſk you, if you can point out thoſe valuable opinions which he complains were ſtolen from him and in which he was anticipated? for with this grievous charge you find he has begun his book.

PUPIL.

My preceptor read many courſes of lectures from time to time, in every one of which the ſubject of the Venereal Diſeaſe formed a part. This was conſtantly practiſed by him until he publiſhed; I therefore do not think that he had a right to complain if the pupils who paid him for his inſtructions had applied his opinions to the purpoſes of practice; for what other purpoſe would they

they have attended him, but for practical inſtruction, and for which they paid him? therefore I confeſs there appears to me to be ſomething uncommonly ſelfiſh in his complaints.

FOOT.

I find you have declined anſwering the laſt queſtion I put to you, and I ſhall not force it. Notwithſtanding your preceptor has thus given his complex method of cure, and notwithſtanding he has conſumed more than an hundred pages in quarto in treating upon the ſuppoſed conſequences of Gonorrœha, yet he is found to aſſert that "Gonorrhœa "cures itſelf." How will you explain this paradox? Is it to be thus explained, that your preceptor finding that he had not a perfect knowledge of cure, therefore preſumed that the iſſue of Gonorrhœa would have been the ſame without any attempt in him to cure it as with it? in my opinion he ſhould either have abandoned his aſſertion that "Gonor-"rhœa cures itſelf" and that "every Go-"norrhœa would ceaſe without any medical "help," or abandoned his incongruous ſyſtem of curing Gonorrhœa and of the ſup-

poſed conſequences of Gonorrhœa; there was no occaſion for him to talk of curing that which cured itſelf.

PUPIL.

My preceptor, I own it, ought to have adhered to the one or the other opinion, and not have embraced both, as they are ſo contradictory to each other. When he ſaid that "Gonorrhœa cures itſelf," he ſhould not have propoſed a ſyſtem for curing it, and a ſyſtem for curing the ſuppoſed conſequences; there appears a contradiction which I am incapable of explaining; and I fear that ſingularity or venality, or call it what you pleaſe, had ſome ſhare in the paradox. He ought not to have laboured ineffectually in ſearch after a cure, and yet denied the neceſſity for it, nor given ſuch a train of conſequent diſeaſes, if he believed that "Go-"norrhœa cures itſelf."

FOOT.

Then the ſequel will prove to you more than was neceſſary. Your preceptor was induced to apply the moſt deſperate and the moſt dangerous remedies that ever were ſug-

geſted for the cure of the ſuppoſed conſequences of Gonorrhœa; and your preceptor has adopted thoſe remedies which the caution of former ſurgeons had baniſhed out of practice. Thoſe remedies, ſir, your preceptor has revived, to cure what? the conſequences of that which cures itſelf; and he has revived them, without even acknowledging that they had ever been in uſe by other ſurgeons, or that they had from their dangerous action been baniſhed out of practice.

PUPIL.

I preſume you refer to his method of cure of obſtructions in the Urethra by cauſtic, and to the inſtrument which he introduced for the conveyance of it.

FOOT.

I do ſir, and I mean to ſay, that he ſtole a practice which had deſervedly remained in oblivion for forty years. I call it ſtolen, becauſe he did not confeſs that it had been a practice, and a baniſhed practice; and I mean alſo to repeat his own words, that " this me-
" thod may be employed both in caſes where
" a bougie will paſs and where it will not."

Now when I aſſerted in a former publication that your preceptor had thus adviſed the application of cauſtic indiſcriminately, the Monthly Reviewer in his obſervations upon my Treatiſe on the Venereal Diſeaſe, took upon him to aſſert, that John Hunter had not adviſed the indiſcriminate uſe of the cauſtic for the cure of obſtructions; in anſwer to him I ſhall only ſay, that I never would belie another, even to defend myſelf.

PUPIL.

I am not ſorry for your own juſtification, that you have quoted thoſe laſt words of my preceptor, as I have heard it more than once denied that he had ever given any ſuch direction.

FOOT.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that he really was ſo preſumptuous as to carry into practice what he has thus recommended. I can pardon all his admirers for not believing half that he has ſaid, even if I proved it; becauſe the practice of it could not have been conducted without ruin to patients, and without diſgrace to any one beſides your preceptor who ventured upon it.

PUPIL.

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I cannot any more than you ſee the neceſſity for the application of cauſtic where a bougie can be paſſed. This aſſumption of my preceptor appears to be bordering ſomewhat upon empyriciſm; and my little experience has convinced me, that there is not a ſtronger objection to an empyric than the application of his noſtrum to diſeaſes for which it cannot do good. It is that univerſality which the empyric aims at embracing, that brings perhaps a diſcovery eminent for particular purpoſes into general diſrepute.

FOOT.

Not being a ſtranger to your preceptor's opinions, you I am perſuaded will believe me, when I quote his having ſaid, that ſince his practice at Belliſle in the year 1761 to the time of his publiſhing on the Venereal Diſeaſe in the year 1786, he had, by a method of treatment which he fully deſcribes, diſſolved every bubo, excepting three, and thereby prevented them from coming to abceſs.

PUPIL.

Sir, I have attended to this aſſertion, and to your former obſervations upon it; and although

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PUPIL.

Sir, I have attended to this aſſertion, and to your former obſervations upon it; and although

although I have ſearched for a reply to them yet I have not found it.

FOOT.

Well then, have you yourſelf examined it in theory, and are you, for that is moſt important, capable of pronouncing either from your own knowledge or from what you have collected from your friends on this fact advanced by your preceptor? that is, whether he could do, or whether any one elſe could or can do that which he there aſſerts he did?

PUPIL.

I admit your objection and I truſt you will not urge me to a more explicit declaration.

FOOT.

Certainly not. I underſtand you as well as if you had gone into the moſt elaborate apology; and I will be content to wait until any one leſs ingenuous and conſequently more hardened will dare to ſupport this diſhonourable avowal. It is not I agree with you worth our time to debate the queſtion; but yet it muſt not eſcape our attention, if it be purely for clenching the enquiry, that your preceptor

preceptor has given many more caſes of patients than three, where buboes under his own care have come to abceſs; and there is one caſe in particular where hemlock had been adminiſtered to a patient ſuffering under a long continued phagedenic bubo, until by the very influence of the medicine, he dropped from his chair and expired.

PUPIL.

It is to be preſumed, that this patient muſt have died of the remedy and not of the diſeaſe; for I cannot agree even with you, if that were your opinion, that the worſe ſtate of a phagedenic bubo and for the cure of which no medicine had been adminiſtered, would produce ſuch a ſudden death.

FOOT.

Undoubtedly not. He died of the remedy. Your preceptor in this inſtance has deceived you; when you thought he ſunk, he ſoared; Apollo was both the god of phyſic and the ſender of diſeaſes; you will find according to the remote tradition of heathen mythology, that it was one trade formerly, and thus your preceptor meant it ſhould continue ſtill.

DIALOGUE THE SECOND.

FOOT.

SIR, I do not mean to reproach but to commend you for thus ſeeing you ſo early returned to renew our converſation; it is the faireſt promiſe of your being intereſted in it, and it flatters my pride and prompts me to candour.

PUPIL.

Social converſation, mutually ſollicited and liberally indulged, always tends to eſtabliſh the genuine deſign of human inveſtigation, and the true knowledge of individual character; the latter is frequently miſconceived for want of intercouſe, and is repreſented through a miſreported medium.

FOOT.

FOOT.

Be that as it may, it has never as yet altered my principles of truth, or ſwayed my reſolution in the avowal of them; but yet I am aſſured that your ſentiment has its juſt weight. I think ſir, when we parted from our laſt converſation, the ſubject of it was your preceptor's infallible method of treating bubo.

PUPIL.

It was; and with your permiſſion the ſooner we proceed to another the better. Sir, I am inquiſitive to hear what you have now to ſay on the ſubject of the blood being contaminated by the Venereal poiſon, when the conſtitution is evidently contaminated alſo; as you know my preceptor was of opinion that the blood in this ſtate is not contaminated at all.

FOOT.

In my opinion, your preceptor was induced from no better motive to avow this doctrine, than he was on what he ſaid on bubo. There is but this difference betwixt the criminality of either, that he can be

more readily detected in a falſe aſſertion when he ſays that he could and had diſſolved every bubo but three, as that is a practical queſtion common to every medical man; every practitioner can follow his inſtructions and can afterwards anſwer for his aſſertions being falſe; whereas it might not be poſſible, upon the doctrine we are at preſent debating, to convict your preceptor by ſo ſtrong an evidence; but if he be convicted by the ſtrongeſt that is poſſible, I truſt that you will admit it.

PUPIL.

Surely ſir, I do not demand impoſſibilities, nor would I ſhelter myſelf or my friend under the ſubterfuge of evaſion. But it muſt not be omitted to be told, that my preceptor has found on his ſide an advocate for the opinion of the blood in that ſtate not being contaminated, which I doubt if it be not too formidable for me to dream of attacking, and which would perhaps even ſhake your reſolution were I but to avow the name.

FOOT.

If you pleaſe, that I might not be governed by the influence of a name rather than by

the eſſence of truth, you will ſtop. I do not wiſh you to go directly into a conſideration of any other authorſhip's doctrines but that of your preceptor's, leſt we confound when we mean to explain.

PUPIL.

I only intend to apprize you of this opinion having taken root in the minds of thoſe who had not been in the way of ſtudying the nature of action of the Venereal Diſeaſe, and that it had been produced in corroboration of the law of action of poiſons by analogy.

FOOT.

Now I underſtand you, and I will reply to it as ſoon as I have diſpatched the principal; that is, when I have done with what your preceptor has advanced upon the ſubject. He has ſaid that although the conſtitution is infected with the Venereal Diſeaſe, yet the blood is not contaminated, and that the blood cannot convey the contamination; that ſecondary ſymptoms, that is, Venereal ulcers produced on the ſurface of the conſtitution infected, and on any part thereof, cannot convey the contamination either. I

ſuppoſe you will admit that it cannot be known that the conſtitution is infected at all, unleſs there be outward and viſible ſymptoms on ſome part of it of its being infected.

PUPIL.

Certainly not. It might under certain circumſtances be ſuſpected, but it cannot be known. I remember very well, that my preceptor's doctrine ſtands juſt as you have ſtated it. I think it a very important queſtion under every conſideration. It is not a queſtion confined to medical men alone, not as a mere whim or caprice of opinion as inſignificant as the cut of a coat, or the form of a wig, or as a new reading in an old lecture-room, but it is a queſtion which it is moſt material to ſociety that it ſhould be rightly decided; for it refers to whether the diſeaſe be hereafter ignorantly or deſignedly propagated from one to another or not. I preſume ſir, you will agree with me, that all our conteſts about opinions, if they do not tend to preſerve mankind from the effect of diſeaſe, are not worthy the attention of honeſt well-meaning practitioners; nor would that claſs be at the pains of engaging in diſputation,

tion, unleſs it were to learn the truth of the queſtion, or from any other motive riſk the cenſure of calumny and ignorance.

FOOT.

You talk well, but your diffidence now-a-days will only ſtand in your way. He who now lives under the awe of cenſure, upon medical queſtions, though he poſſeſs the rareſt genius, will die like a dunce. Conviction can only advance under the protection of perſeverance: a miſer might conceal his gold, he alone has an intereſt in it: but when diſeaſes of beings of our own nature are the objects of enquiry, we join ourſelves with them, we make the intereſt one and common, and diffidence from any motive would only depreſs and impoveriſh human talent, would wrongly concede that conſcious ſuperiority from him who deſerved it to him who arrogated it, do not fear for me ſir.

PUPIL.

I ſee you want no ſupport which I can give you, but my attention you can always command; and I ſhall moſt correctly weigh in the ſcale of my judgement that difference

in

in opinion which you are about to oppoſe to what I have found advanced by my preceptor; as, to be plain with you, my poor capacity has pointed out to me more eſpecially that Venereal ulcers muſt have the power of contaminating.

FOOT.

I not only ſay they have, as a mere matter of opinion, but I aſſert it as a fact of which every caſe of a patient in that ſtate may be produced as an example; not only the diſcharge from the ulcers themſelves will convey infection, but all the ſecretions of a patient thus conditioned are poſſeſſed of the power of conveying infection alſo. Nothing tends more to bare down truth than theory which is not the reſult of practice. As caſes prove my aſſertion, how dangerous and baneful muſt the conſequences be of a denial of them, ſeeing that there is but one only remedy for the cure of the Venereal Diſeaſe! If the poſſibility of infection be denied whereby Venereal ſymptoms are contracted, there muſt be an impoſſibility for a ſubject ever to be cured by the ſame practitioners who do deny it; unleſs they really profeſſed what I

ſeriouſly

ſeriouſly am perſuaded they would, namely, one opinion in their theory, and an oppoſite one in their cure. Your preceptor would go about curing with mercury caſes as Venereal, which his theory denied to be poſſibly Venereal; and if you called his opinion and his remedy into queſtion, and preſſed him cloſe upon the argument, then he would with an hardened effrontery tell you, that "if mercury cured "the complaint, it was no matter whether "it was Venereal or not." Your preceptor would thus try to cure as Venereal caſes, all thoſe dreadful ſymptoms brought on by tranſplanting Venereally-infected teeth, by a child ſucking an infected nurſe, by a nurſe ſucking an infected child, by a ſound ſubject having a Venereal intercourſe with one whoſe conſtitution was infected, and by Venereal ulcers coming into contact with parts of a ſound ſubject and thereby producing Venereal ſymptoms. All theſe poſſible modes of infection I aſſert from the ſtrongeſt conviction of the truth; and your preceptor denies them. I cure them with mercury, becauſe I know them to be Venereal; and your preceptor cures them with mercury, becauſe he ſays he knows them to be not Venereal,

but

but as mercury is their cure, he tells us tha " it is not material, whether they be Vene- " real or not ;" that is, he raiſes a ſtorm of confuſion on pupoſe to aſſuage it.

PUPIL.

I beg your—

FOOT.

Stop if you pleaſe ſir, I have not quite finiſhed ;—and what is more, your preceptor denies thoſe modes of infection not as confirming general opinions both formerly and at preſent maintained, not as confirming what paſſes every day within the ſcope of obſervation among every rational and common practitioner even, nor as what have been advanced by the moſt reputable authors and eſtabliſhed by the moſt able practitioners from the firſt hiſtory of the diſeaſe to the preſent time, as facts indiſputable and without the enlightened knowledge of which the diſeaſe would have been moſt ignorantly miſtaken, and muſt have ever moſt fatally terminated. Your preceptor thus has for the ſake of ſingularity confounded the Venereal law of action, and exchanged eſtabliſhed truth

truth for improbable opinion, regular practice for indeciſive empyriciſm.

PUPIL.

I beg your pardon for juſt reminding you, that my preceptor has given a train of experiments in order to aſcertain the progreſs of the diſeaſe.

FOOT.

He has ſaid as much; and in his experiments conſiſts the vanity of your preceptor. He forced his experiments to bend to his theory. Whatever abſurdity he advanced he confirmed it by experiments. But theſe could never eſtabliſh the true nature of the Venereal Diſeaſe in any wiſe equal to its natural action; as when he applied his experiments wrongly, theſe could not correctly confirm the true nature and extent of action of the diſeaſe. The fact is, that the natural action of the diſeaſe, as it is ſeen in all the varieties of caſes which offer, is the only true and ſolid experiment which practical knowledge can confide in; this is to be depended upon, and by this is to be aſcertained in the moſt perfect manner poſſible the

power and extent of action of the Venereal poiſon. Whoever is inquiſitive about the nature of action of the Venereal poiſon, let him correct this one error, let him ſubſtitute experience for experiment. What ſignifies his proving by experiment that the blood is not contaminated, (as he calls it,) if caſes prove that it is; that ulcers, and that a tranſplanted tooth do not impart the infection, and that a ſucking child is not infected by the nurſe, nor the nurſe by the child, if caſes prove the very contrary; and if theſe are every day ſeen, felt, and underſtood?

PUPIL.

But it muſt not be forgotten, that my preceptor has given the hiſtory of an experiment on one perſon which laſted for three years in order to aſcertain the progreſs of the diſeaſe.

FOOT.

Yes, he has told us ſo, and you may perſuade yourſelf that he did it, or that if he did it he had a right to do it, or that by doing it, he did that which afforded an inſight into the nature of the diſeaſe without which we were ſtill in the dark; for my part

I do

I do not believe that your preceptor ever made that experiment, that he ever could have committed ſo brutal an act; but even when he ſtates it either from reality or fiction, I am perſuaded that the reſult of that experiment has circumſcribed rather than extended our knowledge of the true nature of the diſeaſe.

PUPIL.

But you ſee ſir, for I know you read, that my preceptor's experiment which he made at St. George's hoſpital with ulcerous matter is quoted by Dr. Darwin as a fact upon which he proceeds to eſtabliſh or corroborate rather, a ſimilar fact.

FOOT.

I beg your pardon, it was not a ſimilar fact. It does not follow, if Dr. Darwin's experiment were true, that your preceptor's muſt be. If you take the converſe of the queſtion, and try the action of the Venereal poiſon by variolous poiſon, you will find that no one can have the ſmall pox the ſecond time even by matter imparted from an-

other. Is that the caſe with reſpect to the Venereal Diſeaſe?

PUPIL.

I admit that it is not at all improbable to ſuppoſe, that the blood of a perſon under the influence of one poiſon may impart that poiſon to another perſon, when the blood of a perſon under the influence of another poiſon may not.

FOOT.

That is very fair; but you will preſently find yourſelf undeceived, for that is not the ſtate of the preſent caſe either. Dr. Darwin has quoted your preceptor as a very great authority, but the quotation was not applicable. You will always find how ready I am to ſubſcribe to every fact, and I will defy the whole world to prove, that I ever by evaſion ſhrunk from or perverted any queſtion by which my ſincerity in argument may be doubted. Dr. Darwin poſſeſſes a fine fanciful genius, and has afforded a wonderful diſplay of it to the delight and edification of all his readers. Dr. Darwin will pardon me, I hope, when I ſay that practical and ana-

tomical obſervations are not the creations of fancy, but the labours of truth and judgement, and the reſult of ſolid proofs. Dr. Darwin doubted nothing advanced by your preceptor, becauſe he was not equal to him in the practice of the Venereal Diſeaſe. Dr. Darwin believed your preceptor, and therefore gave him the ſame credit for any aſſertion, as if he had obtained it from his own knowledge. It is a general cuſtom among men of character and ſcience to take each other's data for granted, and that cuſtom is not to be condemned, becauſe now and then a deception is played off, and becauſe now and then a black ſheep is diſcovered. We muſt all be content to learn from authors one part or another of the preſent ſtate of human knowledge, no one of himſelf can embrace the whole; and where ſhall we look for confidence, if it be not found among thoſe who inveſtigate ſubjects ultimately tending to preſerve and maintain the human race.

PUPIL.

Your obſervations appear to me to be perfectly correct and juſt. From the pains you ſeem determined to impoſe upon yourſelf, I promiſe

promiſe that I ſhall readily diſcriminate thoſe inveſtigations which you are proceeding to offer on ulcerous Venereal matter, and which you are inclined to believe does convey the Venereal poiſon.

FOOT.

If there be one fact more obvious than another, this is it; but as your preceptor has ſtated it, you will find him to be correctly right, for he only removed the ulcerous matter from one part of the ſame perſon to another part, and he found that it would not reinfect, and ſo far he was ſtrictly within the pale of propriety. But he made this experiment wrong through ignorance, and from that cauſe he confirmed in ſome meaſure a fact, but not that fact which he ſought after. He eſtabliſhed the fact that the ulcerous matter of one Venereal ulcer cannot when inſerted on a ſound part of the ſame perſon, produce another Venereal ulcer; but that does not prove that if the ulcerous matter of one perſon had been inſerted on a part of another perſon, that it cannot produce another ulcer. Now your preceptor, and from that he reaſoned generally inſtead of particularly,

larly, only inſerted it on the ſame perſon and found that it did not produce another ulcer, and Dr. Darwin knowing no better than your preceptor has implicitly given into the ſame opinion. The ſtrongeſt reflection upon the ſolid intuitive powers of thoſe phyſiologiſts conſiſts in pointing out to the admirers of both, that my diſcovery in this inſtance ſtared them full in the face without their ſeeing it. Pray which do you think is moſt likely to deceive us, ſymptoms of the diſeaſe or their aſſertions, when they are found contradictory to each other?

PUPIL.

It is very clearly underſtood by me, that you diſtinguiſh between the action of the Venereal poiſon of a perſon upon the ſame perſon, and the action of the poiſon of one perſon upon another; and that if it be true, that diſcovery belongs to you, and if falſe, you have fallen in for your ſhare of having made a deluſive vain aſſertion.

FOOT.

I am free to admit, that any appellation however thraſonic would be too mild for me,

me, if what I have aſſerted upon the relative action of the Venereal poiſon be not true. You are welcome to beſtow upon me exactly the ſame epithets which your preceptor has provoked by aſſerting that ulcerous Venereal matter will not infect, that the blood of one infected will not infect, and that infected nurſes giving ſuck to children will not infect them, nor infected children nurſes. Your preceptor is no more, he has deſcended into that valley where we all muſt follow, and therefore any addreſs from me to him would be ſomewhat ſimilar to him who calls after another when he is out of hearing; but he has left his theory behind him, and Dr. Darwin is become in this inſtance his repreſentative; and I ſhall be a little bold in the confidence of my own underſtanding by telling him, that he is perfectly ignorant of what he has advanced upon this queſtion.

PUPIL.

It appears to me I muſt own, to be a needleſs enquiry to endeavour to eſtabliſh or make your diſcovery more obvious by farther illuſtration; or to explain by more inſtances the fallacy of the opinion that the blood is not

contaminated

contaminated. The blood is to be conſidered as the principle of life, and of every ſecretion. Suppoſe a teſticle enlarged and indurated by the Venereal poiſon; I will aſk then, by what other medium was the infection imparted to this teſticle, but blood? let thoſe who deny that the blood is not contaminated tell me what connection there is between the body and the teſticle, beſides blood and nerve? if blood did not convey the infection to the teſticle, why then it muſt be conveyed by nerve, and which is ſtill more ridiculous.

FOOT.

If this had been a new queſtion and firſt contended by us, if common caſes from every period of the hiſtory of the diſeaſe had not convinced every obſerving practitioner of the fact, I ſhould have barely given in my argument to the public and left with them the queſtion at iſſue. But I ſay there is no doubt about the fact; every man that knows any thing of the matter, every man that admires truth, and values the benefit of it, and every man to whom it is neceſſary that it ſhould be known already is aſſured of it.

PUPIL.

I really ſubſcribe to your opinion, for I ſee no reaſon why I ſhould ſo far yield it up as to ſubmit that caſes ſhould give way to theory; that would be too bad. If matters of belief were like matters of fact, then hereſy might be brought into the queſtion.

FOOT.

Surely, a little hereſy is all theſe two phyſiologiſts were ſeeking for. Give their opinions but a general hearing, altercate them, keep up their cork and feather only a little while for the ſake of their public fame, and then, when their game is over, any one elſe may take the battledores out of their hands. Dr. Darwin ſtands upon no ceremony with probability; in my opinion he cares not about it. I ſee another opinion of your preceptor's which he has more egregiouſly outraged, than I could have thought the fancy of any man would have ſuggeſted. But is it not late, and time to adjourn?

PUPIL.

Pray ſir, if you can ſpare the time, proceed now: we are engaged in the very marrow of

of converſation, therefore if you poſſibly can indulge me, do not brak off as yet.

FOOT.

Sympathy, ſir, has been a ſtalking horſe uncommonly favourable to new opinions; juſt as if the power of ſympathy had been ſuſpended, undefined, or unknown till now; and juſt as if it had been an uſeleſs quality in the animal œconomy, before it was brought forward to aid in explanation the new opinions of your preceptor and Dr. Darwin.

PUPIL.

I am not unacquainted with your ſentiments on ſympathy. You only generally ſpeaking object to the uſe of the word as expreſſing a correſponding condition of one part with another of the ſame perſon, and that it was preferably expreſſed by the more general term of "correſponding irritation;" ſympathy implying a mental feeling of one individual for another, and not a corporeal feeling of one material part of an individual for another on the ſame.

FOOT.

You are ſo far right; but there is more yet to be explained. Theſe two phyſiologiſts have not only ſubſtituted ſympathy for correſponding irritation, but have attributed to ſympathy the cauſe of ſymptoms which neither ſympathy nor correſponding irritation will explain. Of this error in your preceptor I have formerly ſpoken; and now I will ſhew you a moſt curious obſervation upon ſympathy by Dr. Darwin.

PUPIL.

As I have not peruſed Zoonomia with an eye of criticiſm, I of courſe cannot gueſs even at what you are ſo obligingly about to inform me.

FOOT.

I do not know how you ſhould; for who can gueſs at that which poſſibility never united? Dr. Darwin in reaſoning upon the power of ſympathy ſuppoſes that the ſymptoms of hydrophobia moſt fatal to a perſon are in conſequence of ſympathy with the wounded ſkin inflicted by the bite of a mad dog; that a perſon bitten ever ſo ſlighty, if

that perſon be infected with hydrophobia, is ſo infected in conſequence of ſympathy and not of abſorption; that particularly the affection of the throat which is the moſt important of all the ſymptoms, as it deprives the perſon of the power of ſwallowing any fluid, is produced by ſympathy with the original bite on the ſkin.

PUPIL.

I ſubmit myſelf to your having ſtudied this ſubject, to your having collected caſes upon it, and to your greater intimacy with the nature of it, than I poſſibly can be. Pray is not the bite inflicted by the mad dog, when it does infect, generally inſignificant?

FOOT.

Yes, generally ſo.

PUPIL.

Does it not moſt commonly heal up ſome time before the ſymptoms of hydrophobia appear?

FOOT.

Often a long time before, and always ſome time before.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

Is not the ſpace of time between the bite and appearance of ſymptoms ſeldom leſs than thirty, and frequently forty, fifty, ſixty, ſeventy, and yet more days?

FOOT.

You are quite correct.

PUPIL.

Then how is it poſſible when the wound is healed, which was to cauſe the ſympathy, when the time is indefinite in which the ſympathy is to take place, when the whole of the ſymptoms of hydrophobia approach in gradual order, how is it poſſible, I aſk, to attribute any one of them to ſympathy? to attribute them to what? to a ſympathy with a wound long ago inflicted and long ago healed? If ſympathy has been the cauſe of thoſe ſymptoms, every perſon who undergoes the ſmall pox either by innoculation or breath experiences all the proceſs of ſymptoms from ſympathy. The ſymptoms of every morbid diſeaſe to which the animal œconomy is expoſed are produced from a ſympathy commencing with the firſt convey-

ance

ance of infection into the habit. Is this not giving a wonderful ſcope to the operation of ſympathy, almoſt amounting to an univerſality?

FOOT.

It is true. There is nothing now-a-days too abſurd to be believed; and I am confident that this opinion will have its advocates, as well as the Doctor's retrograde project, and ſhort paſſage from the ſtomach to the bladder. In ſpite of what the eyes cannot ſee, and the underſtanding cannot approve, the amuſement of the various lecture-rooms will be thus occupied. But if either had the probability or the promiſe of of any plauſible deſideratum, one would be zealous in cheriſhing the inveſtigation from a hope of ſucceſs, and of the benefit that would reſult therefrom, upon the ſame motive that projectors have planned the cutting a navigable paſſage from the mediterranean into the red ſea, or the little canals throughout Great Britain; or that navigators have aimed at exploring a paſſage of ſea dividing the extent of American continent!!!

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

FOOT.

Laugh away, laugh on heartily either at him or me; I find when your preceptor is not the object that you can indulge a little pleaſantry; it is the way of the hawk to fly high, to ſoar above his prey in order to make his diſcoveries; he never deſcends until he has made up his mind to pounce upon the quarry.

PUPIL.

Evoë, Evoë, Dr. Darwin! here is a premium offered to you by the London anatomiſts if you point out the ſuppoſed ſhort paſſage from the ſtomach to the bladder in a ſhorter ſpace of time than the Hudſon's bay company can theirs!!!

FOOT.

Sir, there is this difference between the Doctor and your preceptor: your preceptor did not believe the abſurdities which he advanced, I am aſſured he did not, many of them;

them; whereas the doctor not only has perſuaded himſelf to believe his own abſurdities, but your preceptor's alſo.

PUPIL.

Has not Dr. Darwin alſo given a plan to be adopted for getting male or female children at will?

FOOT.

He has, and I recollect many more plans and opinions which I do not think myſelf competent to decide upon; nor do I think that there is ſcarcely more than one man in this country who can.

PUPIL.

And pray who is he?

FOOT.

Dr. M****.

PUPIL.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! You make me laugh from ſympathy! You have thrown me into convulſions, I ſhould have ſaid ſpaſms! I ſee ſir, you adopt the favourite adage, you

make ridicule the teſt of truth. Now that I have breathed a little, I am anxious to learn your opinion of the nature of that affection in the throat which deprives a patient of the power of ſwallowing in conſequence of hydrophobia.

FOOT.

Sir, it is much eaſier to ſay what a thing is not, than to know what it is. If you read both antient and modern authors, you will find that they widely differ in aſſigning cauſes. One of the moſt prominent features of the human mind is that ſtrong propenſity for finding out cauſes; and as it is moſt commonly an arduous ſtretch of the mental power, the very exerciſe of it muſt be confeſſed to be a mark of inquiſitive induſtry in the mind which is voluntarily thus engaged. But from the limited nature of human underſtanding and from an ignorance in firſt cauſes, we are found to be frequently arrogant and diſappointed in our attempts on reaſoning from cauſe to effect. The Creator alone has the power over cauſes; the Creator directs the effect by the cauſe, and we endeavour to trace the cauſe through the effect.

Thus

Thus in proportion to the judgement of ſpeculative phyſiologiſts, you conſtantly ſee variations of opinion, and every one's theory more or leſs plauſible in an exact degree with his ſtrength of mental endowment.

PUPIL.

You have made a very modeſt apology for the theory you are about to diſplay upon this queſtion; pray proceed, as I promiſe myſelf an exquiſite repaſt.

FOOT.

Certainly I ought not to heſitate. If my native modeſty had forbad me to impart, and hardly had permitted me to riſk opinion of this ſort, the example of others would have corrected my firſt nature. Have you not ſeen perſons in the height of paſſion whoſe whole frame has been agitated, whoſe limbs have trembled, whoſe eyes have looked furious, large, and glaſſy, whoſe faces have been diſtracted, whoſe mouths have foamed, whoſe tones and utterance have been altered, inarticulate, and huſky, and whoſe powers of deglutition have been for a while ſuſpended?

PUPIL.

Frequently.

FOOT.

Now when a perſon is under the influence of a paſſion excited by any natural cauſe adequate to produce ſuch effects, theſe continue as long as the cauſe which provoked them ſupports them, and no longer. The paſſion as it is called being over, the ſigns of it gradually decline, and in proceſs of time the violent dominion of paſſion uſurped over reaſon will be at an end. Now ſir, I conſider the paſſion of hydrophobia to be directly ſuch a paſſion as this common paſſion which I have deſcribed. I conſider every ſymptom of hydrophobia to be directly ſimilar to that produced from a natural cauſe. There is firſt of all a change in the temper, a deſire for ſolitude, a quarrelſome diſpoſition towards the moſt intimate and valuable friends, and at length, the whole frame is agitated, the limbs tremble, the eyes look furious, large, and glaſſy, the face is diſtracted, the mouth foams, the tones and utterance are altered, inarticulate, and huſky, and the power of deglutition is totally ſuſpended.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

So far you have made out a very ſtrong and a very obvious analogy; and you appear to be hitherto correct in your ſtatement; but there remains much more to be explained before you will obtain converts to your opinion.

FOOT.

Probably you are right; we are all too apt to be blind to our own errors, and we ought to be obliged to thoſe who have the wiſdom, the candour, and the courage alſo, to point them out.

PUPIL.

There is a moſt material diſtinction in the cataſtrophè of a perſon in a fit of paſſion and a perſon in an hydrophobia, and I am afraid your critics will not permit it to eſcape. Moſt of thoſe who undergo fits of paſſion recover from them, all thoſe who are afflicted with hydrophobia die of it. If you explain this objection to my ſatisfaction, I ſhall not heſitate to give my aſſent to your analogy.

FOOT.

FOOT.

This is not ſo difficult a taſk as you may imagine; and I am rather ſurpriſed that you did not diſcover my intention before, as you know I laid particular ſtreſs upon the power of paſſion excited from any natural cauſe, that the effect could not ſupport itſelf beyond a limited duration; whereas, when the hydrophobic paſſion is excited, it is produced by the abſorption of a morbid virus; in this inſtance the cauſe is not diſcontinued, and therefore the ſymptoms cannot ſubſide, conſequently no perſon thus afflicted can have the leaſt chance or hope of recovery. In the firſt inſtance, the paſſion is rouſed by ſome mental provocation; in the ſecond, by the action of a morbid poiſon inſinuated into the habit; the one may and does abate, the other cannot; the one is provoked by an external cauſe which may ceaſe, the other by an internal cauſe which never can.

PUPIL.

I ſuppoſe you only mean that this ſhould be received as a conceit, as ſomething offered by you as approaching nearer the truth than what we are told by Dr. Darwin; and looking

ing at it as I do in that view, I am irreſiſtibly impelled to acknowledge, that it is more analogous, more compleat, and more ingenious, than any cauſe I have hitherto heard aſſigned. Apropos! Is it not aſſerted that my preceptor was the firſt who practiſed the method of exciſion of the part bitten by a mad dog? but upon recollection I take upon me to avow that it is ſo aſſerted, and I think it very ſtrange, as I find that you was induced to publiſh your Eſſay on the Bite of a mad Dog purely becauſe of the inadequacy of any other method, and becauſe my preceptor had not adopted exciſion of the bitten part, but had applied cauſtic, and depended upon that.

FOOT.

I did not expect this open confeſſion from you, it is a voluntary tribute to juſtice. I ſee you refer to what is ſaid by Home in his life of your preceptor. It is very true, that I was induced to publiſh my eſſay on the bite of a mad dog, and to collect and bring forward more caſes in the plan I afterwards publiſhed, than ever were collected and well authenticated by any predeceſſor. In that very

very eſſay I prove by John Hunter's letters to Dr. Johnſon that he was perfectly ignorant of this method by exciſion; that his own words are "we ſeem to be as much at "a loſs how to treat it as they were a thou-"ſand years ago." Now this letter was written in conſequence of his having treated two caſes the moſt favourable for exciſion, not by exciſion, but by cauſtic; both of which caſes failed, as both the patients died of hydrophobia.

PUPIL.

I am aſtoniſhed that Home ſhould have advanced as a matter of belief with him what could be ſo eaſily and ſo openly refuted; but I am more aſtoniſhed that he would have hazarded a revival of that which only can tend to leſſen the reputation of his brother-in-law, his own veracity, and that juſt confidence which we ſhould be otherwiſe diſpoſed to give him upon other points which could not poſſibly be ſo eaſily refuted. This appears to me I muſt own to be a moſt deſperate act.

FOOT.

FOOT.

Not more ſo than many more. They who graſp at all things hold nothing faſt. Why ſhould you be aſtoniſhed at the combination of thoſe who hope to appear pre-eminent alone, and who without borrowing from others would not be found to poſſeſs of themſelves one ſingle quality of excellence? It is ſurely time to adjourn. But I ſhall not diſmiſs you without leaving upon your mind a due impreſſion of what we have been debating.

PUPIL.

I ſhall moſt readily give you all my attention, and yield to your inclination.

FOOT.

To fix thoſe conceited opinions of your preceptor, thoſe doubtful experiments and thoſe immoral precepts, to bring his admirers into a fair diſcuſſion of them, to hold them to it without ſubterfuge, to hinder them from ſtarting at their approach, from digreſſing inſtead of cloſely arguing, is a difficult taſk; and can be only attempted by thus publicly challenging them to it. They

poſſibly may be more aſhamed to ſhrink from a fair defence of their preceptor when the public eye is upon them; and may confine themſelves more cloſely to matter of fact, when they know that they are watched.

PUPIL.

That will be coming at once to the queſtion, and the reputation of my preceptor will be more advanced by his opinions ſtanding the teſt of inveſtigation, than by their ſaying that he has a reputation, and avoiding all argument in ſupport of it.

FOOT.

You will be pleaſed to tell them ſo.

PUPIL.

I certainly ſhall, it is but fair, and they are forced to comply with it, or to hold their tongues.

FOOT.

Your preceptor's admirers may be ſtrictly compared to ſtarting horſes; they affect to ſhow the greateſt ſpirit when they ſee an object they dare not face; they ſtart, they prance,

prance, they lay hold of the bit, they endeavour to throw their riders, and all the while when their noſes are attempted to be brought back to the frighting object, their hearts palpitate, their reaſon forſakes them, fear poſſeſſes them, they turn their contrary faces about, and ſtart again.

PUPIL.

I am free to admit that where there is power there is eaſe. Theſe convulſive irregularities denote feebleneſs. To correct with temper or to deſpiſe with eaſe, to anſwer direct or to be ſilent without muttering, will be ever the conduct of thoſe who feel their own ſuperiority, either by natural or cultivated talent.

FOOT.

Well then ſir, I ſhall conſider you as their delegate. Your conciliatory manners warrant you to be a proper perſon for the purpoſe. When they are aſſembled at the Lyceum to prove the poſſibility of their preceptor's opinions, for even that may be difficult, tell them how incumbent it is upon them to anſwer the following queſtions. I

may afterwards perhaps ſend them in ſome more, but let theſe ſuffice for the preſent, and you will have the goodneſs to take them with you.

1. Is the diſcharge in a Gonorrhœa, Pus?

2. Is the ſpecific extent of virus confined to an inch, or an inch and a half, or two inches at moſt, within the Urethra?

3. Is ſympathy the cauſe of the inflammation throughout the Urethra? of the inflammation on the neck of the bladder? of a ſwelled teſticle? of a bubo? of Phymoſis and of Paraphymoſis? of chordé?

4. Is his cure of Gonorrhœa that which has improved modern practice? who follows his method? are his bread pills, or is his injection of ſolution of ſublimate the moſt preferable example of a remedy?

5. Need there be any remedy for that which cures itſelf?

6. When

6. When Gonorrhœa cures itſelf, might he not have ſpared two of his chapters at leaſt, the one which treats on the cure of Gonorrhœa, and the other for the treatment of the conſtitution in the cure of Gonorrhœa?

7. What do you think of electricity, and of cicuta for the cure of chordé?

8. Is the muſcular power of the bladder encreaſed, that is, mended by its being diſeaſed?

9. Is not the application of cauſtic to ſtrictures in the Urethra a very good thing? and is not the following paſſage from the book of your preceptor a very good thing alſo? "This method may "be employed both in caſes where a "bougie will paſs and where it will "not." does not this ſhew that it is a very good thing?

10. How many caſes of ſpaſm have you ſeen in the Urethra, independent of poſitive obſtruction?

11. What

11. What think you of his chapter on Impotence? is not the following paſſage in it a very honeſt thing? "This complaint is by many laid to the charge "of Onaniſm at an early age, I think I "may affirm that this act in itſelf does "leſs harm to the conſtitution in general, than the natural."

12. Is not the following paſſage a very honeſt thing? "I could even allow a man who "has a Gonorrhœa to have connection "with a ſound woman, if he took care "to clear all the parts of any matter, "by firſt ſyringing the Urethra, making "water, and waſhing the Glans."

13. Do you ſay with him, that Phymoſis and Paraphymoſis never happen in conſequence of Gonorrhœa only?

14. Will you preſume to cure a Chancre by cauſtic alone, and will cauſtic alone reduce a Chancre to the ſtate of a common ſore or wound?

15. If

15. If he has diſſolved every Bubo but three, which he found within his practice ſince the year 1761, if he has ſaid ſo, and if he has ſhewn you how he did it, cannot you do the ſame?

16. Has he not admitted in page 14, and ſubſequent pages, "the poiſon being the "ſame in Gonorrhœa and Chancre," and yet has he explained to you how it happened that a perſon might have a Gonorrhœa without its producing on himſelf a Chancre, and a Chancre without its producing on himſelf more Chancres or Gonorrhœa?

17. Did not his ignorance of the nature of the Venereal poiſon being harmleſs to the perſon who ſecrets it, induce him to try thoſe experiments upon the ſame perſon which he ſhould have tried upon another? and was he not from this error induced to deny the nature of that infection which caſes are conſtantly proving, namely, that the poiſon can be imparted from one perſon to another by ulcerous matter as well as by the fluid

from

from Gonorrhœa or Chancre, by a tranſplanted tooth, by ſucking, and by all the ſecreted fluids of a perſon infected?

18. Do you believe that he made an experiment which laſted three years: is there one living witneſs to juſtify the fact, and what do we derive from it?

19. Has not Home ſaid in his Life of John Hunter that he believed that he was one of the firſt who taught that "cutting out the part was the only mode of preventing the Hydrophobia," and where are the practical inſtances?

20. Is it likely that he knew of the certainty of the effect from the bite of a mad dog being prevented by the exciſion of the bitten part, when he treated two caſes which proved fatal by cauſtic, inſtead of exciſion? when as it is confeſſed from his own words "every other known "method was tried" in thoſe two caſes? when he confeſſes that "we appear to "be as ignorant as they were a thouſand "years ago?" and when he has not even

even hinted at one ſyllable about the mode of exciſion of the bitten part? Now is it likely or is it not, that my Eſſay on the Bite of a Mad Dog firſt brought your preceptor to his reaſon upon theſe fatal caſes?

DIALOGUE THE THIRD.

PUPIL.

YOU told me ſir, that my converſation was acceptable, and you have generouſly ſuppoſed me deſirous after knowledge; you will I truſt agree with me that knowledge belongs to no particular parties, and that parties are generally formed among men only for the purpoſe of promoting intereſted deſigns, and to which a ſhew of knowledge is rendered an aſſiſting and a neceſſary agent.

FOOT.

You open ſo frankly, that I almoſt fear to encounter you. Your breathing time has given

given you confidence, and made your mind more firm. I like it. Heſitation may be a delicate feature in an innocent mind, and it may be a monſtrous mark in an hypocritical one alſo; but frankneſs will bare examination all around, and will voluntarily expoſe itſelf and turn itſelf about, in order that it might be more cloſely and more thoroughly examined.

PUPIL.

I have been reading your life of my preceptor, and I have read all the criticiſms upon it. I have read his life by Home alſo.

FOOT.

You might have ſaid Home's life, for it will ſerve for either.

PUPIL.

That is true. He ſeems uncommonly ſhy of you, although he has endeavoured at following your order, and given a different conſtruction to your facts. It appears to me clearly, that he has brought forward and dwelt upon facts which he would not have dreamt of, but in conſequence of your having

pointed them out before; and has aimed at giving them another inclination for the purpoſe of repelling what you have advanced; ſilently and cunningly conveying the antidote without noticing the poiſon, exhibiting the remedy without announcing the diſeaſe, wiſhing not to be ſeen anſwering you leſt a reference ſhould incline the ballance of argument againſt him, opening one eye of his readers and ſhutting up the other.

FOOT.

Oh! he is moſt ſincerely welcome; it would be hard to deny a valet-de-chambre the wardrobe of his deceaſed maſter; or would it be juſt to ſay, that if he wore his maſter's cloaths, he did not come honeſtly by them. Home is welcome to appear in any part of his brother-in-law's dreſs, provided he gave a juſt account when he did undertake to do it, how the brother-in-law himſelf came by it. If your preceptor had been the original author of the practice of cutting out the part bitten by a mad dog, I certainly ſhould have had no objection to any reputation which might have been derived from it, deſcending as an heir-loom in perpetuity to his ſucceſſors. PUPIL.

PUPIL.

I believe verily that you would not, if that had been the caſe. Then ſuppoſe we read over your life of my preceptor together; I retain, I flatter myſelf, enough of the objections which have been offered to it, and enough of the contradictions which have been urged againſt it, to qualify me for meeting the principal arguments as they come in review before us.

FOOT.

With all my heart; although it might be ſuppoſed that one does not very much like to have thoſe damned good-natured fellows, as Sir Fretful Plagiary calls them, too often brought into our company.

PUPIL.

That appears a very indifferent matter to you. The more they attempt to grind you, the ſharper you are. In the firſt place, I like your introduction; it contains the whole property of a biographer.

FOOT.

I thank you ſir, proceed.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

Your deſcription of the conteſts between the Hunters and the Monroes, between the Hunters and Pott, and between the Hunters and Baron Haller that would have been, if Haller had not conſciouſly felt himſelf above it, has been variouſly criticiſed; by ſome we are told that the ſubject was generally known, that it had already occupied too much of the attention, and that it was too remote for revival; as if theſe were reaſons why it ſhould not have been put into the life, as if that which had been a cauſe of public appeal, and which had excited a contention for years in a public print, the Critical Review, ſhould not have had a corner in the life of one of its moſt important agents.

FOOT.

You are right; but ſuch is the cold indifference in which pure knowledge is held, that you find, when the contending paſſions have ſubſided, and the principal actors have withdrawn from the ſcene, that the ſubject of diſpute being only their ſecond object, and their own intereſt being the firſt, the one may

ſleep,

ſleep, when the other is anſwered: beſides, one may be canted over with the plauſible ſentiment of many honourable contentions having terminated by the reconciliation of parties, and that therefore it is invidious in any man to attempt to revive them.

PUPIL.

I feel the force of your obſervation; and I ſuppoſe, that will be the plea which will be given by the Critical Reviewers for having been ſilent altogether upon your life of John Hunter, for not having even noticed it.

FOOT.

The Critical Reviewers might or might not ſuppoſe that I meant an attack upon them, when I ſaid the Hunters hired their Review as a vehicle of their complaints, and retained it's editor by a bribe; but that was no fault of mine, it belongs to the natural hiſtory of your preceptor, unleſs I have advanced a falſehood by referring my readers to the Critical Review, and by their finding nothing in it to prove the queſtion; but if what I ſaid in the life be true, if they have thus embarked in this deſperate and mercenary

cenary project, the fault is with thoſe who pretending to be independent, and to impart purely the knowledge of others and their own obſervations upon it, are detected in venally diſſeminating diſſentions and propagating falſe opinions, with thoſe who have put themſelves in the way of being expoſed, when the truth of the caſe accidentally comes out, and is again accidentally revived to the public eye.

PUPIL.

Beſides ſir, I preſume that the preſent authors of that Review were not the authors during the conteſts, thoſe being thirty years ago; and that therefore the preſent could not conſider themſelves in any manner principals in tranſactions too remote for their time; at leaſt it would have been politic in the preſent, and it would have ſhewn that they were, what Reviewers ought ever to have been, maſters of the paſſions, if they had not given ſuch ſtrong cauſe for ſuſpecting that they mingled their feelings with thoſe of their predeceſſors: ſurely ſir, you cannot ſuppoſe that they are at this preſent time, the ſame ſet of people?

FOOT.

FOOT.

Not the individual ſet, but the ſame race; not individually the ſame mind in the ſame body, the ſame lodging in the ſame houſe, the ſame coat upon the ſame back, fate and faſhion have rendered that impoſſible; but they are of the ſame claſs with the former, impelled and continued on by the ſame neceſſities, they receive the ſame pay, feed on ſimilar food, lie in ſimilar chambers, are endowed with ſimilar talents, partake of ſimilar educations, trained up to ſimilar practices, poſſeſs ſimilar countenances, and unbluſhingly hold out ſimilar palms of corruption.

PUPIL.

Then you think that they looked out for a bribe from you to defend their own reputation, and not having received one, they ſuffered it to take its chance.

FOOT.

Mark me ſir, I do not think for them, or care about them. The authors of Triſtram Shandy and of the Crazy Tales have exchanged with them a few leſſons in their

own way; they knew very well how to adapt themſelves to every condition; they aſcertained with much more nicety than I can, the exact depravity of the human heart; I would rather refer you for their characters to them, than take up our preſent time farther about them; they are juſt worth our notice, and that is all; in ſpite of us they will always be incorrigibly the ſame to the end of time, the loweſt among men, drudging on from neceſſity. Have you not lately ſeen in your way to Greenwich aſſes with ſand-bags upon their backs?

PUPIL.

I have.

FOOT.

And ſo did I thirty years ago. Now theſe which you lately ſaw probably were not the ſame individual aſſes which I then ſaw, or which might have been then ſeen by Sterne, or by Hall, or by any other paſſenger from London to Greenwich, that was their cotemporary; but ſtill aſſes are deſtined to carry the bags of ſand from Greenwich to London.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

How long do you reckon an aſs might live?

FOOT.

Aſk that of a Reviewer.

PUPIL.

The ſeries of your life of my preceptor has been ſaid to be a libel upon him, as attacking his education, his candour, his veracity, his honour, his chirurgical talents, and his general deportment.

FOOT.

I never expected to write the life of John Hunter without being ſtung by hornets; I was prepared for that in my own mind before I began; I did it with open eyes and mental conviction; but the only queſtion is, whether what I have advanced be true or not?

PUPIL.

That they muſt juſtify before they can obtain credit for their aſſertions, or condemn yours. They muſt alter the effect of your facts and eſtabliſh their own, before they

can give another colour to his life: this is natural.

FOOT.

And that they never can do; I will go farther, they dare not contend with me for the truth article by article. Whenever I have aſked, what advances your preceptor has made in ſurgery, or in anatomical diſcoveries, of any value, I have never found one of them capable of fixing and dwelling upon any thing. I now aſk you ſir, whether you can do better for him? What did the doctrine of abſorbents derive from him? I do not mean what he ſays it derived from him, but what by comparing the advances of others with his, what did it derive?

PUPIL.

I am not of myſelf prepared to anſwer that; but if he cannot be defended there, I know not where he can.

FOOT.

I am ſorry I put the queſtion to you. We are told by the brother-in-law, in his life of him, that he entered as a gentleman com-

moner

moner at St. Mary Hall Oxford, and we find him the next year at St. George's Hoſpital; now it would not have been very difficult to have found out that he had not ſtaid long at an Univerſity, if we had not found out where he was the next year.

PUPIL.

That I believe might as well have been left alone; and from what I have heard from him during his lecturing, and from what I have ſeen under his own hand, I ſhould have been better pleaſed if that had not been noted, becauſe it naturally raiſes the curioſity to enquire into the effect of an education which has exalted every man of genius whoſe good fortune it was to partake of it.

FOOT.

Sir, I ſuppoſe at the moſt he might have made an excurſion one ſummer day to St. Mary Hall, and if he ſtaid long enough there to hang his hat upon a peg, I dare ſay it was for a time no longer than the hat might have remained without needing to be bruſhed afreſh. Now ſir, I call upon you, who were more converſant with him than I, to

ſay

ſay whether you did not find yourſelf much more mortified than he was from the embarraſſments he conſtantly experienced through a barren education? Sir, this I mean to aſſert, that an illiterate man never feels conſcious of his own deficiency.

PUPIL.

What ſignifies our dwelling upon that which no one can enquire into without being convinced? I beg you would put aſide that parcel of his manuſcripts which I ſee you are preparing to lay before me, to do what? to convince me of what I confeſs.

FOOT.

Then let them hold their tongues about education. I will ſo far comply with you as to keep the manuſcripts for another provocation; but whilſt the witneſs is living, you ſhall have the following anecdote, leſt it be contradicted when what he told me cannot be maintained. This will not keep like a manuſcript, it being ſubject to the fleeting breath of life. A phyſician wrote to your preceptor to appoint a time for conſulting with

with him about a caſe; your preceptor returned a witten anſwer beginning thus—

PUPIL.

I intreat you ſir, to change the ſubject. Let us proceed with our peruſal of his life, at the ſame time I am free to admit you have been altogether forced upon this.

FOOT.

I yield to your interference.—In the life written by the brother-in-law his excellences in ſurgery are enumerated; they conſiſt in a daring extirpation of tumours; in the operation of the popliteal aneuriſm; and in cutting out the part for the prevention of hydrophobia.

PUPIL.

The latter you have anſwered already to my fulleſt ſatisfaction. The merit given him does not belong to him, it belongs to you, and it was defaming his name to attribute that to him which was not his own; it was in a great degree confirming what you have perſiſted in, that he was ſo barren of himſelf as to be conſtantly cultivating a reputation

by

by what he ſtole from the ſtock of others. But you muſt allow that the tumours he diſſected, as ſtated by the brother-in-law, were great actions, or rather great appropriations of ſound judgement and operating power.

FOOT.

The operation was a daring one, and not aided by judgement. It was his contempt of judgement that made him operate; his brother-in-law has not told you the true event of this caſe. If you read this letter, it will ſhew it you. You may read it aloud. Theſe men are not to be anſwered by the bare aſſertions of any man of honour.

PUPIL.

This letter I ſee came by the Penny Poſt.

" SIR,

' In page 31 of Mr. Hunter's Life by Mr. Home it ſays " he diſſected out a tumour of " the neck, which one of the beſt operating " ſurgeons in this country had declared, " rather too ſtrongly, that no one but a fool " or a madman would attempt, and the pa- " tient got *perfectly well*." The fact is, that Mr.

Mr. Pott and many other eminent ſurgeons in London and on the Continent perſuaded Mr. Pocock not to have the tumour removed, becauſe it was ſtrumous and connected with many other glands in the ſame ſtate of diſeaſe; Mr. Hunter gave his decided opinion that it would cure him, on which Mr. Pott exclaimed in the words quoted.'

'The reſult was that Mr. Pocock died in twelve months after the operation, with an enlarged ſpleen, diſeaſed lungs, and other encreaſed lymphatic glands, declaring the operation had haſtened his death.'

'W. French.'

'Mr. Jeſſe Foot,
Surgeon,
Dean Street, Soho.'

This appears to me to be very explicit, and plainly eſtabliſhes my preceptor's want of judgement; and the brother-in-law producing this as a ſelect inſtance of his ſkill in ſurgery proves how he muſt have been hard puſhed for a precedent. But you certainly

muſt approve of his method of treating the Popliteal Aneuriſm?

FOOT.

Why ſir, the knowledge of the operation is an improvement in the practice of modern ſurgery; yet its preferable ſucceſs will be ever dependant upon the nature of the caſe. The operation will be more ſucceſsful in caſes where the aneuriſm has been produced from an accident, than from a conſtitutional cauſe. This diſtinction will lead to its ſucceſs. It ought only to be preferred under the direction of judgement. It would be the worſt practice to attempt it in ſome caſes, as it would be the beſt in others. It is upon the whole relatively excellent. I ſee the brother-in-law has not in his catalogue of excellencies touched upon your preceptor's applying tight bandages to arms inflamed from the operation of bleeding. This was giving the ſimple idea, for I believe it never would have arrived to the pitch of being a practical one, a decent, a modeſt, and a ſilent funeral; and I hope it will reſt for ever without a monument!!!

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

The application of tight bandages to inflamed arms was an idea which you did a laudable act to the public in reprobating, and you have my thanks for it, as I assure you I might have been disposed to have followed his theory, had I not read your arguments against the practice.

FOOT.

If you have any more surgical questions to put to me, pray let us hear them, do not be sparing of his excellencies; or otherwise one might be told of some that were omitted hereafter by one or other of his squalid pupils, who guggle forth their jargon, as water comes out of a bottle.

PUPIL.

Pray have you read his Treatise on Gun-Shot Wounds?

FOOT.

I have read it, but am not prepared to speak of it; hereafter will be a time for that. I must have a little conversation with the

ſurgeons from Germany, whom he did not ſend out, for thoſe whom he did ſend out, were complained againſt. The lateſt ſurgeons ſent thither will be able to judge practically upon the ſubject. His caſes whence he drew all his inferences, and which offered when he was green in practice at Belliſle and at Portugal, were neither adequate from variety in their proper nature, nor from his practical knowledge, at that period of his life, for giving ſuch a conception of the effect of gun-ſhot wounds, as one ſingle action of the outer poſt of guards would furniſh in the preſent continental war. The practical ſurgeons in the preſent continental war muſt have ſeen enough to realize the truth of the dreams of your preceptor, or rather to be enabled to diſcern, whether they be dreams or realities. What a pity it is, that the treatiſe had not been publiſhed two years ſooner !!!

PUPIL.

I know your reaſon. The wounded who came from Germany to London to be cured, did not apply to him, becauſe they left his pupils there ignorant, and conſequently con-

ceived that their maſter muſt have been ſo here. But if this treatiſe had then come forth, they muſt have been convinced of the contrary; and inſtead of applying on their return to other ſurgeons, would for their own intereſt have applied to him. It appears, I confeſs, that my preceptor was very much at leiſure both at Belliſle and at Portugal; for it was during his ſtay there, that he was ſo full of thoſe firſt conceptions which he afterwards matured, and produced to the world. All his wonders in his book entitled "the Animal OEconomy" had their creation in the year 1762. His note-book is conſtantly referred to for events of this period. His Paper on the Organ of Hearing in Fiſhes, his wonderful power in the diſperſion of a Bubo, with many more, what you are pleaſed to call, fabulous diſcoveries, had their origin at Belliſle, or at Portugal.

FOOT.

Whatever ſubject had been publiſhed upon by another previouſly to having publiſhed on the ſame, he always antedated, in order to ſhew that although he was foreſtalled

ſtalled in the printing, he could not be foreſtalled in the idea.

PUPIL.

That could only be a ſucceſsful piece of fraud, as long as he could ſupport the credit of being eſteemed a man of honour.

FOOT.

And ſo long he had my moſt unbounded credit. Although he did not publiſh upon a ſubject until twenty years after his return from Belliſle, yet the note-book was conſtantly referred to; and even previous to his going to Belliſle, and whilſt he was diſſecting with his brother, the note-book was found to be filling up apace, upon every diſcovery brought forward by others, upon every period ſubſequent to that. His note-book, it would appear, was to him as the Sybils Leaves, although he was not or could be conſcious of the ſimilarity.

PUPIL.

Perhaps you ſuppoſe he reſolved in this note-book to invent the digeſtion of the ſtomach after death, and to preſent the invention twenty years hence.

FOOT.

FOOT.

I hear you call it an invention; I do not know whether you mean it as a ſarcaſm upon me or upon your preceptor; but I will inſiſt upon it, that it can be an invention only; for if it were a diſcovery, any anatomiſt may ſee it when it is once pointed out; whereas as an invention, it might for ever be confined to the Muſeum of the Hunters. No one elſe has or can ſee it, not even the inquiſitive eye of Spallanzani can diſcern it. The invention fairly belongs to the Hunters, and the brother-in-law needs never to take out a patent for it from fear that ſome one elſe ſhould dare to take away the right.

PUPIL.

His obſervations upon the Torpedo were not the firſt that were made upon that fiſh?

FOOT.

They were not. Reaumur, Redi, Steno, and Lorenzini, had publiſhed theirs; but your preceptor did not mention their names.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

Pray was the diſcovery of certain receptacles of air-cells in birds firſt made by him?

FOOT.

You know it was impoſſible. The diſcovery long ago belonged to Profeſſor Camper, who had publiſhed upon it, and who came on purpoſe over to England from Holland to call your preceptor to an account for the piracy. You may ſee his apology lame as it is, in a note annexed to the paper.

PUPIL.

Was the deſcription of the Gillaroo Trout originally his own?

FOOT.

No, it was not. Watſon had publiſhed a deſcription long before him, but your preceptor has not mentioned his name.

PUPIL.

Was his deſcription of the Gymnotus originally his own?

FOOT.

FOOT.

In his paper on the Gymnotus he has not noticed a ſingle author, although Bancroft and Garden had both of them publiſhed their deſcriptions of it before him.

PUPIL.

His treatiſe upon teeth, I ſee in his life has had the fulleſt criticiſm from you. You have there enumerated a long liſt of the moſt reputed authors who had written upon this ſubject. I am hurt to find that my preceptor could have publiſhed upon a ſubject ſo general, without acknowledging the merit of a ſingle author. By his always concealing, in every inſtance, the names of authors from whom he borrowed ideas, it plainly appears that his deſign was to take any man's right away from him whenever he wanted it, and wherever he found it.

FOOT.

The names of the authors are ſo reputable, that becauſe he has not quoted them I will. By fixing your attention upon them, you will learn not to forget them. They are Euſtachius, Fallopius, Columbus, André

Dulaurens, Rolpinkius, Duverney, Bertin, Albinus, beſides ſome profeſſed dentiſts; thoſe your preceptor had either not known, or choſe to forget, I care not which. But there is a point in my criticiſm on this treatiſe, which directly attacks your preceptor's veracity, and I want to know if his advocates will ſeriouſly venture to vindicate it.

PUPIL.

I think I know what you hint at. Is it not about his injecting a tooth?

FOOT.

Sir, in page 111 he told us in a goſſiping ſtyle, that he injected a tooth, and ſlitting it in halves, found that it was well injected; and in page 36, he told us that "we cannot "by injection prove that the bony part of a "tooth is vaſcular." Now I long to know if this injected tooth be in the Muſeum, if it be there, I call it a wonderful inſtance of impoſſible ſkill; and if it be not there, I call the whole account an idle tale fabricated for the amuſement of his credulous pupils.

PUPIL.

PUPIL.

Your inference, independent of your irony, is fair. A tooth ſo injected muſt now be found in the Muſeum; if it hath not a place there,—but I ſhall ſay no more. I ſee you have brought forward a caſe directly againſt his opinion, that a pregnant woman having the ſmall-pox ſeemed not to infect the fœtus.

FOOT.

I have. I recommend a peruſal of this caſe to Dr. Darwin, as I know not what other communication there is betwixt the mother and the fœtus, but by blood. Beſides this caſe, there are many ſimilar to it confirming the ſame fact, publiſhed before your preceptor's paper upon opinion; and which as they were contradictory to what ſeemed to be his opinion, he has not noticed at all.

PUPIL.

The account of the Organ of hearing in Fiſhes would, by what he ſays, appear to be his own; for if I recollect, this was one of his amuſements at Portugal.

FOOT.

Yes, ſo he has told us. If you believe him, he made this diſcovery in the year 1760, and he publiſhed it in the year 1782. Now Profeſſor Camper publiſhed on the ſame diſcovery in the year 1761, and again in the year 1774; and in the year 1778, the reſearches made by Geoffroy on the organ of hearing in fiſhes were examined by the Royal Society of Phyſicians at Paris, and their report upon them was then printed. Sir, I mean to avow on every one of thoſe productions your preceptor has been deſignedly ſilent.

PUPIL.

His obſervations on the Structure and OEconomy of Whales, I believe, were publiſhed in the year 1787, and I think you produced in his life the titles and the dates of two papers by Profeſſor Camper prior to thoſe obſervations of my preceptor.

FOOT.

I did. One bears date in the year 1765, the other in the year 1776, and neither of them have been regarded by your preceptor.

It

It is thus that the ſilly credulity of his admirers has been played upon; for it was thought that all his productions were original diſcoveries. The ſame plagiariſm might be detected in his Obſervations upon Bees, in which he has omitted the names of every author of repute, and in almoſt every other ſubject which he has ever treated upon.

PUPIL.

The ſubjects which you have avowed to be not original, I confeſs you have fully proved that they were not ſo, and have convinced me that the thorough intention of my preceptor, by concealing the original authors, was, that they ſhould be deemed proper to him alone. Pray then ſir, anſwer me this queſtion in the plaineſt and trueſt manner, Was there any thing of his own in the Animal OEconomy, and which no one elſe before him had written upon?

FOOT.

I believe there were; and that you may not miſtake them, and may ſee the importance of them, I will point them out. They conſiſt of the Digeſtion of the Stomach after Death,

Death, of aſcertaining the Cauſe of the variegated Feathers of a Pheaſant, of the account of a Free-Martin, of experiments on Worms to aſcertain the Power of Heat in Animals and Vegetables, of remarks on a new marine Animal, of the invention of a Bellows for the Recovery of drowned Perſons, and of the procreative Power of an half ſpayed Sow.

PUPIL.

Apropos,—has it not been ſaid that you have never ſeen that Muſeum which you have affected to deſcribe, and is it true that you have not ſeen it? But before you anſwer the queſtion, I muſt obſerve to you, that in my opinion you have made out a juſt and candid arrangement of it.

FOOT.

I have never ſeen it; but if I had, I could not myſelf have given ſo good an account of it as that which I offered in my life of your preceptor. It was done for me by a competent man of excellence; and I will give the Critic credit for his ſagacity but not for his candour, as when he ſaid that I had not

ſeen the Muſeum, and therefore could not deſcribe it, he omitted to acknowledge, that it was fairly deſcribed. Now if he had ſaid that the deſcription could not have been mine, becauſe it was ſo juſtly and ſo fairly given, he might have been right.

PUPIL.

I comprehend you; you mean to declare, that the deſcriptive part of my preceptor's Muſeum was not done by you; that it was too good, and too honeſt to be done by you, and that it poſitively was done by another.

FOOT.

I do. The inferences and remarks which follow are my own. Now ſir, what will this fooliſh Critic ſay for himſelf, when I defy him to produce an account of the Muſeum more in its praiſe than is there given? and what will he ſay for himſelf, when he reflects, that if I have done the Muſeum more than juſtice, if I have in ſome meaſure ſacrificed my opinion, and concealed that which might have injured the intereſt of the property? what will he ſay for himſelf in having

having urged this explanation by his thus playing the Marplot?

PUPIL.

I am free to admit that any man of diſcernment might have ſeen that your comment upon the Muſeum was ſoftened from a more delicate conſideration than a conviction of the propriety of Parliament purchaſing it.

FOOT.

You may rely on it, that I ſpared my opinion from the beſt of motives: I might have ſaid much: I had the power, but did not uſe it: I owed the debt to juſtice, and yet I evaded paying it.

PUPIL.

Since you publiſhed the life of my preceptor, have you read a little pamphlet ſold by Kearſly upon the ſubject of Parliament purchaſing the Muſeum?

FOOT.

I have. It might be called an incendiary Letter, at one time ſervilely ſupplicating, and at another demanding, juſt as ſturdy beggars

beggars act before and after they are refuſed. It is pretty to ſee how this ingenious advocate can twiſt and apply contradictory tones to ſuit his purpoſe. Now, your preceptor is ſaid to embrace all the emoluments, from pure merit, of all the places that Government had to beſtow. Now his practice was more extenſive, and his income from it larger, than any other ſurgeon's, either before or at his time. Now he has bequeathed by will as a patriotic legacy his Muſeum to the public;—and now it is a valuable acquiſition to the Engliſh nation;—and Parliament is to have the honour of purchaſing it, by which the pupils will be attracted to London!!! Then, mark the conſequences from Parliament's refuſal.—Then the money would be wanted for its value, as your preceptor died poor, and his family ought to be conſidered as the children of the ſtate.—Then if Parliament does not purchaſe it, the Muſeum ſhall not remain in London, it ſhall be ſent to Scotland, it ſhall not remain here without being purchaſed, but it ſhall be ſent thither if it be not.—Then London by this will be a ſufferer, it will loſe what was an honour to it, what was collected in it by money gained

in it.—And then the pupils will rebel, and withdraw from the London Hoſpitals to follow into Scotland the fortune of the Muſeum. A ſerious threat of emigration!!!

PUPIL.

I think it was not the moſt conciliatory method of addreſſing Parliament, which the author might have taken; and I apprehend it muſt have been diſpleaſing to any one who has read it.

FOOT.

Beſides, I think it will be difficult to prove how this collection can improve the art of ſurgery. It will be hardly worth while for a ſtudent who comes up to London for a twelvemonth to quit the practice of anatomy and ſurgery, and embarraſs his mind about the preſervation of diſeaſes, the hiſtories of which are unknown to him, and about morbid diſſections neither made nor ſeen by himſelf. The engraver's art can multiply every important figure in the collection; and the deſcription of it can be read and ſtudied in any place, and at any time, when the ſtudent finds himſelf at leiſure. Whenever the

Muſeum be purchaſed, the coſt of it does not end there. The preſervation of it might be lengthened by expence and care, yet even with thoſe, its duration cannot be long. There are two ways of diſpoſing of it, if Parliament be ſo uncharitable as to lend its deaf ear to the application, or not to adminiſter to the will. The threatened reſolution of ſending the whole of it to Scotland might be taken, or it might be ſold in diſtinct lots to your preceptor's pupils, who will doubtleſs buy them up greedily, as pilgrims did heretofore the relicts of their ſaints.

PUPIL.

A truce with your irony, ſir; but I cannot help remarking how unhandſomely the Hunters ſeem to treat the Engliſh, their patrons. William Hunter offered his Muſeum to them only for the fee ſimple of a piece of ground, and it being refuſed, he left by will his Muſeum to Scotland; and thus we have been threatened with the diſpoſal of my preceptor's.

FOOT.

Civil to the laſt, or rather as long as there is a hope of their turns being ſerved. They do not ſeem content with large incomes from the public whilſt living, but ſeek a profit after death; or rather would draw one if they could. There might be a deſire in every man for perpetuating his own excellencies I admit, but ſome good muſt be derived from them, before poſterity will ratify the proud idea.

PUPIL.

That cannot be contradicted. Sir, in your ſeries of tranſactions in the life of my preceptor, every one muſt have ſeen, that you have written to men, however partiality might have warped the judgement. It cannot be ſaid that you have not been critically nice in eſtabliſhing the proofs of your various anecdotes; or that you have not given them with a ſcrupulous authenticity, well knowing that reaſonable beings require to be convinced by reaſon only, not by authority.

FOOT.

It will now be no difficult matter to prove every thing I have advanced; and it was for that

that cauſe I publiſhed his life ſo ſoon after his death, that any one article which I have given to him if falſe or perverted, may be now alſo the better contradicted. I am confident that if the ſame life had been written fifty years hence, there are many of the facts which I have ſtated, and which now muſt be received, that would not then have been credited. "De mortuis nil niſi bonum" has been conſtrued "ſpeak nothing but good of "the dead;" it is I know generally ſo taken, as if the dead were always to be praiſed. If this were the true conſtruction, the adage thus conceived would be a wicked one; it would place the higheſt virtue and the loweſt vice, the nobleſt ſincerity and the vileſt hypocriſy upon the ſame baſement.

PUPIL.

Certainly he that ſpeaks the truth of the dead, ſpeaks good of the dead, that is, juſtly of the dead.

FOOT.

Therefore ſir, pray tell his admirers, that inſtead of their ſaying that I have blackened his

his character, it is their duty first of all to contradict by better proof than I have brought, what I have said in the life of your preceptor, if they cannot,—there is his character.

FINIS.

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